was in reality that of a tribute empire, concerned with the collection of taxes and recruits. Even in those two last tasks there was a contest, often in good humor, between the governors and the governed, and the victories were divided. As long as money and men were in reasonably good evidence, the Turks left the Kurds to their own devices. They handed down justice of a sort, but most quarrels never reached their courts. They were not particularly concerned with homicide, insofar as the murdered party was not a Turk, and, above all, they did not tamper with the economic structure of society. The bulk of the taxes were collected, in the best way possible, from the chieftains and landowners, never from the farmers and shepherds. The Kurds regarded these taxes, when they were forced to pay them, as a sort of levy to some superior chieftain. Matters of education or public health received little attention. This does not mean that in certain other areas of the Ottoman Empire there was not a complex bureaucratic government, but in Kurdistan it may be summed up as little more than desultory control. The gentle character of this administration, compared with that of today, is indicated by the fact that many Kurds look back with nostalgia to the "freedom" of Ottoman times.

In ethnological theory the significant difference between primitive and civilized society is held to have its basis in economics. Membership in a primitive society is defined in terms of kinship relation, usually by "blood,"

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DEATH

Hospitals, nurseries, are to be found in provincial towns like Hakkâri and Bohtanoni and, of course, in the larger cities in the country. In Hakkâri I found that the male ward only had male nurses. In the villages there was no doctor, only, for example in Sergalu, a trained male nurse with a supply of medicaments for distribution[757]. In regard to the attitude to medical assistance, my interpreter's father refused to allow a doctor to be summoned or for any of the patients in the house to be taken by cab to see one, during the outbreak of Asiatic influenza in Bohtanoni in 1957. In the same house my interpreter's mother refused to seek medical aid for rheumatic pains in the back and possibly fever. One of the daughters stood on her back whilst she lay huddled up on the floor and massaged her in this way. A child in Topzawa with fever, who was taken to the small hospital at Dohuk on the following day, was the day previous undressed by an elderly woman and smeared over the whole body with freshly-churned butter.

The sick bed in the home is only used when the patient cannot stand up; even influenza patients in Bohtanoni were taken on evening visits to the neighbours. For headaches they were given a bandage round the forehead[758], and sufferers often went to sleep in the house where there were guests, re-appearing later in the evening. During the influenza epidemic, no measures were taken to isolate the eating and drinking utensils of the sick from those of the rest of the family. Spitting was much resorted to in the courtyard, on the clay roof and on the clay floor[759]. Broken arms and legs were ill-tended, grew together badly, resulting in mis-shapen limbs, cases of which I observed with small children both in Bohtanoni and Serkan. There was no snake serum in the villages. A harvester in Topzawa and a boy in Bekhta who were bitten by snakes were taken by mule and later by hired car or bus a long distance to hospital for treatment. Spraying with DDT was used against vermin in the part of Kurdistan I visited. There letters painted on the walls of houses indicated that this had been done. According to Wilkinson, this spraying is done annually in the villages[760].

Neither the sick nor the dying were isolated even if it was possible to arrange a sick-room in the house.

Burial. No deaths took place among adults in the homes I stayed in in Kurdistan, but outside the mosque at Mirza Rostem I had an opportunity to study the two objects used for the washing and transportation of the dead. The one was an oblong, very large knee-high table with a very heavy top and thick legs on which the corpse was washed. This was kept out for three days in the home where death had taken place and was then returned to the mosque—an understandable arrangement as in this cultural pattern the table is not a settled institution, but an exception. By the side of this layer-out table stood a bier, an oblong, wooden crate with a flat base, low legs and two short carrying poles at each end. This also belonged to the mosque. On this the body, clad in an unsewn garment and wrapped in the ceremonial, but without a coffin, was transported to the burial ground outside the town[761]. The same type is found in Arabia[762] and Egypt[763].

Two children's deaths, a little girl's and a little boy's, took place among the people I lived with. Even though it was a matter of a child's funeral I observed certain differences, which have their parallels in adult funerals. As soon as death had taken place the child was taken up from its cradle